

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 20395 160924Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03
H-01 /044 W
----- 025039 /10
R 160845Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1785

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, US, IT, XA
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL ITALIAN ASSISTANCE TO USG IN AFRICA-RELATED
AFFAIRS

REF: ROME 17298

1. DURING THE PAST YEAR AND MORE, THE ITALIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS BEEN OF EXTRAORDINARY ASSISTANCE TO THE USG IN A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS RELATING TO AFRICA. CHECKLIST WOULD INCLUDE THE MAJOR EFFORTS MADE IN LATE 1975 IN REGARD TO KAGNEW CAPTIVES OF ERITREAN SEPARATISTS, WHICH MAY WELL AT ONE POINT HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL OR EVEN ESSENTIAL IN PREVENTING THE EXECUTION OF THE CAPTIVES. IN ANGOLA THERE WERE CASES OF DANIEL GEARHART, GEORGE BACON AND MARION MILLER. BEYOND THESE, ALL OF WHICH HAD OBVIOUS HUMANITARIAN CONNOTATIONS, MFA HAS BEEN ACTIVE ON OUR BEHALF IN REGARD TO FSL JULIO CORREA AND RETENTION OF OUR FORMER CONGEN PREMISES IN LUANDA, ESSENTIALLY ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS WHICH THE MFA MIGHT WELL HAVE CHOSEN TO BRUSH ASIDE.

2. MFA HAS BEEN HIGHLY OPEN AND COOPERATIVE WITH US IN SHARING ITS INFORMATION ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN ANGOLA, PERHAPS CULMINATING IN ITS CAREFULLY DETAILED AND COMPREHENSIVE READOUT ON THE DO NASCIMENTO VISIT TO ITALY AND HIS MESSAGE TO THE USG.

3. WHAT PERHAPS HAS NOT BEEN OBVIOUS IN ALL THIS IS THAT IN EACH CASE THE ITALIANS MADE A MAXIMUM EFFORT ON OUR BEHALF. IN THE ERITREAN PROBLEM IT ENGAGED ASSETS AND SENSITIVE RESOURCES WHICH ARE NOT ORDINARILY PUT AT THE DISPOSITION OF
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FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. IN NO CASE HAS THE MFA BRIDLED AT BEING

ASKED TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS FOR US AND FOR THE MOST PART WENT BEYOND THE LETTER OF WHAT WE ASKED, EVEN THOUGH OUR FUZES WERE OFTEN SHORT AND OUR LEVIES SOMETIMES PUT AN EXTRA-ORDINARY BURDEN ON THEIR COMMUNICATIONS.

4. IN OUR REFTEL, WE RECOMMENDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAKE NOTE OF THE USG'S APPRECIATION FOR THIS EXTRAORDINARY DEGREE OF COOPERATION BY MEANS OF A LETTER TO MFA FROM A SUITABLY SENIOR DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIAL, SUCH AS SECRETARY SCHAUFLE. ON REFLECTION, I WOULD NOW LIKE TO AMEND THAT RECOMMENDATION TO SUGGEST THAT A NOTE FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER HIMSELF TO FON-MIN FORLANI WOULD BE QUITE IN ORDER, IF THE EARLIER-SUGGESTED LETTER HAS NOT BEEN SENT. THIS LEVEL OF US INTEREST AND APPRECIATION IS NOT ONLY WARRANTED BY THE FACTS ABOVE-MENTIONED, BUT, ON A MORE PRAGMATIC LEVEL, WILL HELP MAINTAIN THIS OPEN COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT WHEN WE NEED COMPARABLE HELP IN THE FUTURE.

5. WHOMEVER THE SIGNER, RACHELE AND VECCHI (REFTEL), WHO HAVE BEEN KEY OFFICIALS IN THESE EFFORTS, SHOULD GET APPROPRIATE MENTION IN THE DESPATCHES, ALONG WITH THEIR SUPERIORS, DIRECTOR GENERAL (POLITICAL) WALTER GARDINI AND MFA SEC GEN RAIMONDO MANZINI, WHOSE COLLABORATION MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE WORKING LEVELS TO PERFORM SO WELL FOR US. BEAUDRY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, INTERVENTION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME20395
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760463-0034
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761237/aaaabfjy.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ROME 17298
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 SEP 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OFFICIAL ITALIAN ASSISTANCE TO USG IN AFRICA-RELATED AFFAIRS
TAGS: PFOR, US, IT, XA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006